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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 20, 2005

MWR price increases timed to coincide with COLA survey *Increases include recreation, business programs, CYS*

HEIDELBERG, GE- With the goal to continue to provide Soldiers and families with top-quality Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs, the Installation Management Agency-Europe MWR Division has announced necessary price and fee increases will take effect June 1.

Price changes will be for only some recreation and business programs and services within communities where adjustments are needed, and not all MWR patrons will see price increases.

The good news is the adjustment in prices is timed to coincide with the cost-of-living allowance (COLA) pricing survey this summer. Making necessary price adjustments now, rather than continuing to delay them, ensures any higher prices will be included in the COLA pricing survey.

“IMA-Europe MWR is dedicated to providing customers with the best in top-quality Army morale, welfare and recreation programs,” said Michael Cain, Chief of IMA-E MWR Division. “Making necessary price adjustments now, rather than continuing to delay them, ensures any higher prices will be included in the COLA price survey.”

Department of Army program standards require that MWR programs and services must break even; some must make a profit to continually reinvest in and improve the quality-of-life MWR programs, services and facilities customers expect.

Each Area Support Group performed a rigorous review of prices for MWR recreation and business programs this spring to identify problem areas and determine the degree of price adjustment needed. Senior leaders understood that price adjustments are necessary to ensure all MWR programs meet profitability goals and remain financially healthy.

Final pricing increases will be determined and approved within each local community. Some areas may see no price increase at all.

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Cain said MWR, which has held the line on raising prices even as costs increase, cannot continue to defer necessary price increases any further and affect customers' wallets in the long run.

Also timed to coincide with the COLA survey, IMA-Europe MWR Child and Youth Services fees will increase beginning Sept. 1, for all communities. CYS fees will be adjusted in every program and category to comply with the current Department of Defense Child Development Program fee ranges based on family income levels.

The intent of the DOD fee policy is for every family to spend approximately the same percentage of its income for child care. The scale is based on total family income (including wages and allowances, but without cost-of-living allowance/post allowance), not on rank or grade.

In reality, CYS fees generally cover only half the actual cost of Army child care provided to each child. Fees paid by families cover only the costs for salaries and training of the staff who work directly with children and youth; appropriated funds provided by Congress pay for all other costs, such as facilities, administration, equipment, supplies and food.

With the sliding scale-based fees and the cost of care subsidized by Congress, no family pays the full cost of child care or youth programs, regardless of which income category it falls under.

With 100 percent of Army child development centers in Europe working to maintain accreditation standards, Army families are getting the best quality child care at a significantly reduced cost. In comparison, fewer than 10 percent of off-post centers in the United State are accredited, while costs for equivalent child care and youth programs are significantly higher—more than 100 percent in some areas.

The multiple child discount of 10 percent for child care, school-age services, and CYS team sports will remain in effect, and discounts for head coaches and parent/teen CYS volunteers will continue to be available in communities where approved. The annual CYS registration fee is an Army-wide standard fee, valid for a 12-month period regardless of Army assignment or re-stationing.

Further information on IMA-E MWR in Europe is available at <http://www.mwr-europe.com>.

